

FARMLAND PRESERVATION SURVEY



Washington County, in cooperation with the local UW-Extension Office, has developed this survey to obtain your opinions about farmland preservation in your municipality. The results will help guide your town or village as it decides whether to participate in Wisconsin's new Working Lands Initiative. Thank you for your input!

1. Where do you own most or all of your land?

Town/Village of Town of Hartford (41 responses) (approx.29% response rate)

2. Approximately how many total acres do you own within Washington County?

140.71 acres (average)

3. In the last few years, how many of these acres have you:

A. Typically farmed yourself 96.41 ac B. Rented out for farming 32.15 ac (averages)

4. Do you currently receive farmland preservation tax credits?

14 Yes

27 No

No response: 0

5. Would you like to receive tax credits in the future for preserving your farmland?

17 Yes

13 No

11 Not sure

No response: 0

6. Would you consider participating in one or both of the following?

A. Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) 10 Yes 13 No 17 Not sure No response: 1

B. Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) program? 7 Yes 15 No 15 Not sure

No response: 4

7. Is the agricultural infrastructure (co-op, veterinarian, etc.) you need close enough to your operation? (check one)

29 Everything my operation needs is close enough

6 Most of what's needed is close enough

0 Most of what's needed is NOT close enough

No response: 6

0 Nothing my operation needs is close enough

8. What type of infrastructure, if not already present, would help increase your operation's efficiency? (check all that apply)

2 Food processing facilities 2 Transportation facilities
4 Storage facilities 4 Agricultural suppliers
2 Co-ops 1 Veterinarian services
4 Other (please specify) see below No response: 27

- > Less Government
- > Wider Roads
- > My operation is fairly efficient. I could see more opportunities for small growers.
- > Organic practices for all

9. How should non-ag development occur in rural areas? (check one)

12 Scattered where appropriate
7.5 Concentrated in a few specified areas
13 There should be little or no non-ag growth in rural areas
2 Not sure
4.5 Other (please specify) see below No response: 2

- > South of Hartford—there is no dairy there.
- > It should be allowed.
- > In the course of a farmer's life, tough times (financial) for the family could perhaps save the farm. If a small operation could sell (illegible) lots. As to large corporate farms. They are equal to a factory and housing for employees may be needed
- > Food plains
- > Land owner should be allowed to do whatever with their land.

10. How would you like to see the future (next 10-20 years) of agriculture in Washington County? (check all that apply)

9 Same as it is today 5 Gradually phase out farms
3 Hobby farms predominate 4 Larger farms
8 Organic or niche farming play a significant role 24 In general, a farm-friendly environment
11 Several Agricultural Enterprise Areas in existence
11 Multiple easements or similar farmland protections in place
4 Not sure
4 Other (please specify) see below No response: 0

- > Years ago things were pretty good, before all the programs tried to take over.
- > Reduce farms and add density of development
- > Wildlife restoration
- > 5-10 acre small part-time farms, not as much hobby as sustainable life.

11. What is your preferred vision of "rural character"? (check one)

12 Plenty of small and medium-sized farms
11.5 Farms of all sizes and types, including larger operations
0 Scattered, large-lot, well-landscaped subdivisions
2 Green space consisting of a mix of woodlands, wetlands, etc.
9 A mix of uses including farms, subdivisions, home businesses, and nurseries
1 Not sure
3.5 Other (please specify) see next page No response: 2

- > Get AEA, Pace, PDR, and preservation programs out of people's mind set. They just don't work long term - 30+ years
- > Take a picture it will last longer
- > Average size farms, with preserved woods and wetlands splitting rural, non farm housing. Scattered and cluster with under an acre each, clustered with rural ag area where 5-10 acre farmettes are permitted
- > Scattered, SMALL lot well-landscaped subdivisions

12. If you own a farm, please identify current issues you have, if any, with non-ag landowners? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <u>17</u> Traffic | <u>16</u> Loss of prime farmlands |
| <u>7</u> Stormwater flow problems | <u>9</u> Vandalism or other crimes |
| <u>13</u> Encroaching non-ag development pressures | <u>11</u> Change in "fabric" of rural community |
| <u>15</u> Lack of tolerance for ag-related noises, odors, activities | <u>8</u> No significant issues |
| <u>3</u> Other (please specify <u>see below</u>) | No response: 6 |

- > Dumping
- > Taking over—eminent domain
- > Missing neighbor to neighbor communication. Hard to get to meet your non farm new neighbor.

13. If you own a farm, what, generally speaking, are your future plans? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| <u>16</u> Keep farming in Washington County until my retirement | |
| <u>1</u> Move elsewhere in order to keep farming until my retirement | |
| <u>19</u> Pass the farm on to my children or others in the next generation | |
| <u>4</u> Get out of farming as soon as practical | |
| <u>9</u> Increase the size of the farm | |
| <u>0</u> Decrease the size of the farm | |
| <u>10</u> Seek to put/keep farm in a Farmland Preservation zoning district | |
| <u>4</u> Seek to put the farm in an Agricultural Enterprise Area | |
| <u>4</u> Preserve the farm with a conservation easement on all or part of it | |
| <u>7</u> Split off part of the land for development | |
| <u>5</u> Other (please specify) <u>see below</u> | No response: 6 |

- > Conservation easements—a bad bad deal
- > Develop the entire farm
- > My land is already preserved with a conservation easement
- > Land has not been rented in 12 years
- > Transition to horse business enterprises and/or organic crops and perhaps goats

This survey was mailed by the Washington County Planning & Parks Department to all landowners in the Town of Hartford who own at least one property that is 20 acres or greater in size.

Survey questions were developed by UW-Extension. Survey results were tabulated by UW-Extension.